

Redactions are for non-responsive information

**OW Staff Meeting Talking Points
4-19-13**

FRIDAY: Report from the Week

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National Rivers and Streams Assessment

Sierra Club Campaign

- We discovered through a marked increase in comments submitted to the NRSA email box that the Sierra Club has posted a NRSA-related item on their Advocacy page asking people to send in a message about the National Rivers and Streams Assessment to President Obama and the Acting Administrator.
- The message encourages the Administration to issue the WOUS guidance and beginning a formal rulemaking: *“With 55 percent of our rivers and streams in poor shape, the administration must take action now by issuing a final policy that will protect small streams and wetlands and beginning a formal rulemaking.”* (The full message is attached.)
- Communications and Outreach on the NRSA Report Continues:
 - May 16, Ellen Tarquinio updated the *Monitoring and Assessment Partnership*, an EPA/State group, on the NRSA draft report particularly focusing on the types of comments and questions we are looking for as part of the public review.
 - May 17, Denise Keehner, Ellen Tarquinio and Sarah Lehmann briefed the *House Minority T&I staff* on the NRSA report and results. The staff was very supportive of the program and the report.
 - May 17, Ellen Tarquinio updated *AWCA Monitoring, Standards & Assessment Committee* on the NRSA report, particularly focusing on the public comment timeline and process.
 - May 18, Ellen Tarquinio and Sarah Lehmann briefed the *Subcommittee on Water Availability and Quality (SWAQ)* on the NARS program and the results of the NRSA report.

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Attachment:

From the Sierra Club website

(<https://secure.sierraclub.org/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=10843>):

Send a message to protect and restore our rivers and streams

Fifty-five percent of river and stream miles are in poor condition, according to a national survey EPA released in March. Too much nitrogen and phosphorus pollution, bacteria and habitat loss are the main problems. The Obama administration should act immediately to improve water quality by protecting headwater streams and wetlands.

Send a message today!

1. Complete the form below with your information.
2. Personalize your message if you wish.
3. Click the Send Your Message button to send your message to:
 - o President Barack Obama
 - o Mr. Robert 'Bob' W. Perciasepe
 - o EPA docket:

MESSAGE

I am writing to comment on EPA's National Rivers and Streams Assessment, which shows that 55 percent of the nation's rivers and streams are in poor condition. President Obama's legacy should not include leaving the nation's rivers and streams more polluted than when he came into office. The Obama administration should take immediate action to improve the quality of our rivers and streams by finalizing its long-delayed policy guidance clarifying the protection of small streams and wetlands.

I commend the EPA for its new survey, the most scientifically valid national monitoring study of its kind. The bottom line is that too many of our rivers and streams are in bad shape. Excessive fertilizer runoff from agriculture, manure from factory farms, poorly treated sewage and runoff from developed areas have become a major water quality problem. Forty percent of streams have excess levels of phosphorus and 27 percent have excess nitrogen. These pollutants lead to harmful algal blooms that kill fish, close beaches, harm local economies and, in some places even threaten drinking water quality.

The quickest action the President could take to improve water quality in rivers and streams is to clarify the protections for small streams and wetlands, which trap and filter pollutants, like excess nitrogen and phosphorus, and prevent them from traveling downstream, where they could cause algal blooms and dead zones. The administration announced plans to restore protections to these critical waters in April, 2011, but it never finished the job.

With 55 percent of our rivers and streams in poor shape, the administration must take action now by issuing a final policy that will protect small streams and wetlands and beginning a formal rulemaking.